



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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DWD TO REVAMP LABOR MARKET INFORMATION

INDIANAPOLIS (November 30, 2005) - The Indiana Department of Workforce Development has launched a major upgrade of the content and usability of the Labor Market Information data it regularly compiles on Indiana's workforce. Throughout 2006, the department will systematically improve upon and develop new modes of information on various labor market data, statistics and trends. Included will be a new labor information web site, scheduled to launch in March of 2006.

"As part of our focus on customer service, we are committed to improving all levels of our various service-lines, including labor market information" said Ron Stiver, Commissioner of the Department of Workforce Development. "The Labor Market Information data we regularly produce can become much more relevant and useful for policy-makers, workforce professionals, and the general public through these upgrades."

The project is part of the state of Indiana's State Data Initiative and is in response to a report issued last year that found major shortcomings in the state's compilation of data, its usefulness and usability, and its relationship to effective policy-making.

Earlier this year, the department contracted with the Center for Urban Policy and the Environment and the Indiana Business and Research Center to assess the needs and preferences of regular users of the state's labor market information. One hundred and fifty individuals from state and local governments, business, health, economic development, the media, higher education, and non-profits participated in focus groups in May in Indianapolis, Evansville, Fort Wayne, and Gary. An online survey yielded additional information in the form of approximately 300 responses. Recommendations that emerged included:

- A need to provide wage, occupational and skills data via trend and time series.
- An ability to customize data by regions, and to access data at county, township and establishment levels.
- A call for Geographic Information Systems (GIS) mapping of labor market information.
- An overhaul of the Department's labor information website, INEWS, with emphasis on making it more user-friendly.
- Development of career guides for community colleges and schools.
- More timely job vacancy survey data.

- More focus on small business development.
- Training on how to access and utilize data and reports.

In response, the Department of Workforce Development is improving the content and usability of labor market information for its users, with a major overhaul of its various labor market products. Among the various components of the project and target dates for each:

January 2006

- Develop occupational projections
- Package and deliver trends in emerging occupations and industries

March 2006

- Implement GIS labor market mapping
- Collect and analyze skills assessment data
- Create user friendly website for users of LMI

May 2006

- Develop training for new website

June 2006

- Package career guides for community colleges and schools

September 2006

- Partner with educational institutions to support small business development

October 2006

- Develop skills projections
- Develop county level estimates of labor market information

November 2006

- Package and develop skills sets in demand

The Indiana Department of Workforce Development is charged with continually improving the Hoosier workforce by assisting companies to create new jobs and improve employee skills. The agency offers a variety of training and educational grants, partners with Indiana's 26 WorkOne Centers, administers the unemployment insurance system, provides labor market information, assists employers with preparing workers for layoffs and closures, and operates the statewide job placement service. For more information on DWD and its programs, call 888-465-4616 or visit the web site at www.workforce.IN.gov.